



WEB COMIC  
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# FRANKENSTEIN

10c

SUMMER  
No. 19



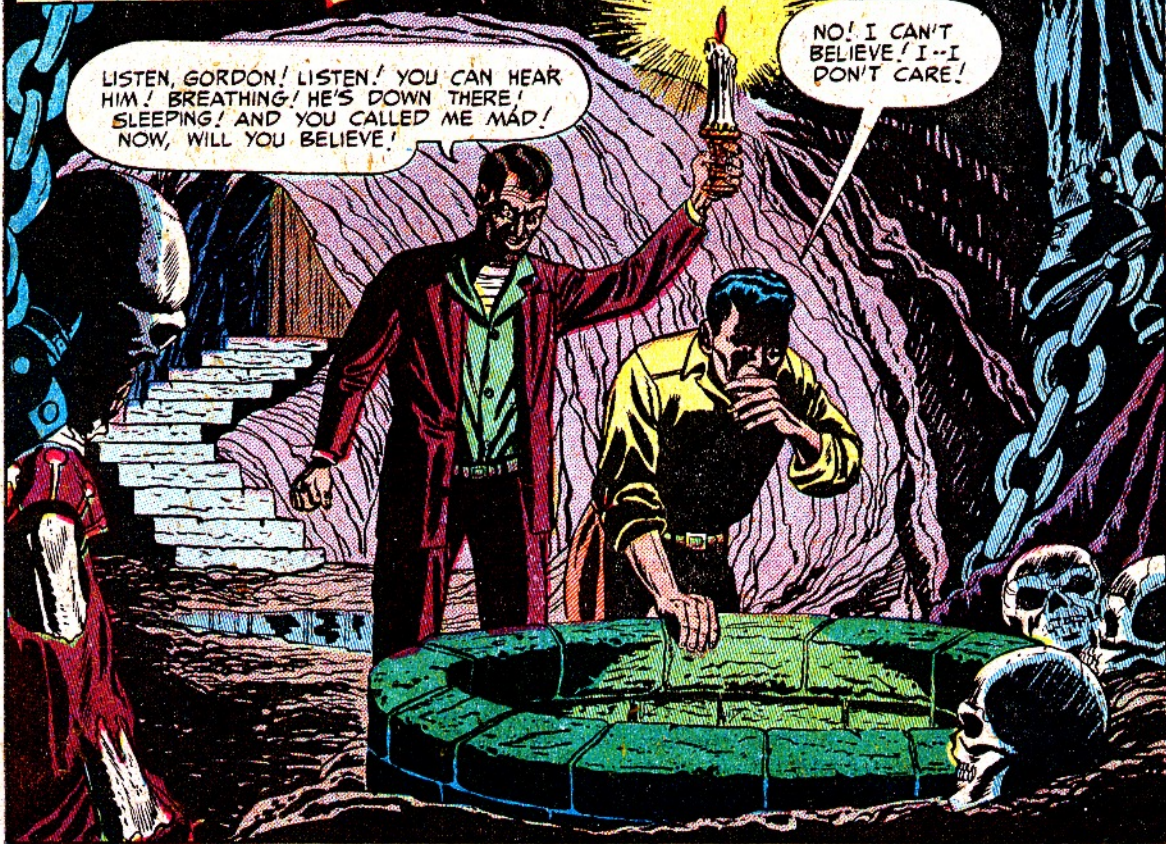


DEMONS? BAH! SUCH THINGS EXIST ONLY IN TORTURED DREAMS! WE KNOW THAT! BUT WHO IS TO SAY WHERE DREAMS LEAVE OFF AND REALITY BEGINS? WHO IS TO SAY WHAT IS REAL-- AND WHAT IS...

# NIGHTMARE

LISTEN, GORDON! LISTEN! YOU CAN HEAR HIM! BREATHING! HE'S DOWN THERE! SLEEPING! AND YOU CALLED ME MAD! NOW, WILL YOU BELIEVE!

NO! I CAN'T BELIEVE! I--I DON'T CARE!



IT WOULD BE SO EASY TO SAY THAT IT WAS ALL A DREAM! BUT I SAY THAT IT WAS NOT A DREAM! THAT NAMELESS HORROR WAS REAL! AS REAL AS CAIN LOCKMAN, WAS ON THAT NIGHT ONLY A FEW MONTHS AGO!

CAIN? YOU--YOU!

IT IS YOU, MAN, DON'T YOU KNOW ME? IT'S JOHN! JOHN GORDON! YOUR AGENT! I'VE BEEN POUNDING ON YOUR DOOR FOR TEN MINUTES!

I--HEARD YOU. BUT I HOPED YOU'D GO AWAY. I KNOW YOU, GORDON! WHAT DO YOU WANT?

WANT! CAIN, WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU? I HAD TO WALK ALL THE WAY FROM TOWN! NO ONE WOULD DRIVE ME! AREN'T YOU GOING TO ASK ME IN?

NO! YOU CAN'T COME IN! YOU MUSTN'T! YOU'VE GOT TO GO BACK!





I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A PATIENT MAN, BUT IT HAD TAKEN ME SIX MONTHS TO FIND CAIN LOCKMAN, AND I WAS WET AND TIRED!

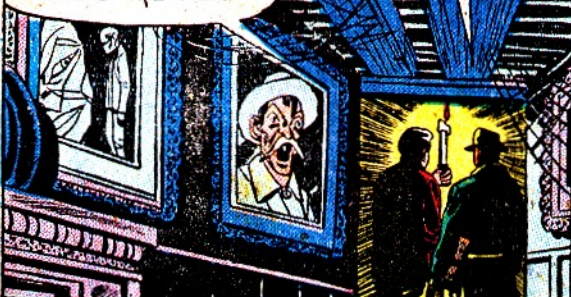
GO BACK? I'LL GRANT ANY ARTIST HIS TEMPERAMENTAL PECULIARITIES, LOCKMAN, BUT IF YOU THINK I'M WALKING SIX MILES BACK TO THE STATION IN THIS DOWNPOUR, YOU'RE CRAZY!



SIX MONTHS AGO CAIN LOCKMAN HAD HAD A NERVOUS BREAKDOWN, RECOVERED...AND THEN DISAPPEARED! BUT AS I FOLLOWED HIM DOWN THAT DARK CORRIDOR I WONDERED IF HE HAD RECOVERED!

YOU'LL HAVE TO LEAVE IN THE MORNING! AS SOON AS THE SUN IS UP! HE WON'T BOTHER YOU THEN! HE'LL BE ASLEEP! HE SLEEPS DURING THE DAY!

HE? YOU MEAN THERE'S SOMEONE BESIDES YOU IN THIS MAUSOLEUM?



ONLY FOR SIX MONTHS THERE HAVE BEEN NO PAINTINGS! LOOK, THIS PLACE AND THAT GET-UP OF YOURS IS OKAY! AFTER ALL, YOU DO PAINT THE WEIRD AND BIZARRE! BUT I'M HERE TO TALK BUSINESS!

"MAYBE YOU'VE SEEN SOME OF CAIN LOCKMAN'S PICTURES! BLACK LANDSCAPES, TORTURED FIGURES! HE WAS ALWAYS PECULIAR! BUT HIS WORK SOLD!

IF YOU HADN'T TOLD ME ONCE THAT YOUR FAMILY OWNED A HOUSE IN MASSACHUSETTS, I'D NEVER HAVE FOUND THIS PLACE!

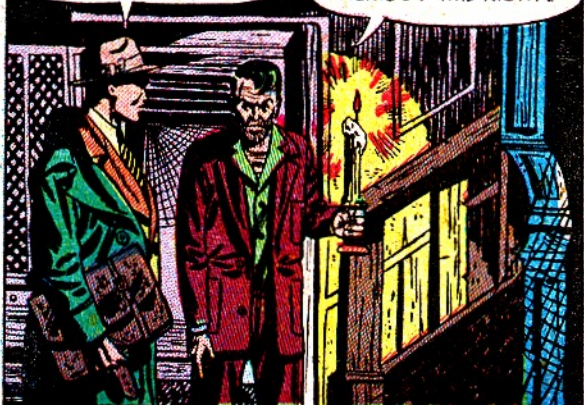
CAIN, WHY DID YOU DISAPPEAR? WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING?

NOTHING! I... I DON'T PAINT ANY MORE! I... GORDON, GET OUT! FOR YOUR OWN SAKE! DON'T STAY HERE!



WELL, I'LL BE... WHY THIS PLACE LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING RIGHT OUT OF THE DAYS OF COTTON MATHER! BR-R... CAIN, WHY ON...

YOU... YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE COME IN! BUT NOW THAT YOU HAVE... COME WITH ME! QUICKLY! IT'S ALMOST MIDNIGHT!



"BUT THERE WAS NO ANSWER TO THAT! HE LED THE WAY TO A ROOM! A TINY, CELL-LIKE ROOM OF FILTH AND SHADOW!

YOU WILL SLEEP HERE WITH ME IN THIS ROOM! BUT YOU MUSTN'T LEAVE IT! NO MATTER WHAT YOU HEAR! NO MATTER WHAT YOU SEE!

CAIN, WHAT IS ALL THIS? I... I'VE SPENT MONTHS LOOKING FOR YOU... AND YOU TALK... GIBBERISH! I'M YOUR AGENT! REMEMBER? I SELL YOUR PAINTINGS!



NOW, WAIT A MINUTE! YOU STOPPED PAINTING? YOU COULD NO MORE STOP PAINTING THAN YOU COULD STOP BREATHING! I CAME HERE TO SEE YOUR WORK AND I'M GOING TO!

YOU... ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT! STAY IF YOU LIKE! BUT I HAVE NO PAINTING TO SHOW YOU! I... YOU SLEEP THERE!





HE WAS ILL! ILL AND HALF-HYSTERICAL! THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T PRESS HIM! TOMORROW WAS ANOTHER DAY! I DROPPED ONTO THE COUCH, DOZED AND LATER...

WHAT... I MUST HAVE DOZED OFF! IT... CAIN! WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU DOING?

NOTHING! NOTHING! I... GO TO BED!



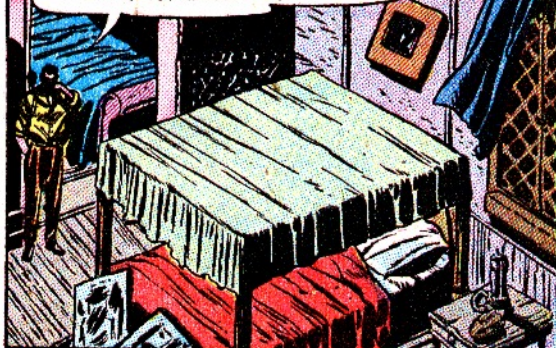
BUT LOCKMAN WASN'T THERE! I DRESSED AND WANDERED OUT! I WALKED, EXPLORED, WITH THE SOUND OF THE RAIN LIKE THE TAP OF SKELETON FINGERS ON MY EARDRUMS! AND UPSTAIRS...

SO THIS IS WHERE HE WORKS! I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN HE WAS LYING! HE GOT PAINT IN HIS VEINS! BUT THAT CANVAS... HE'S NEVER ATTEMPTED ANYTHING THAT HUGE BEFORE!



I WAS DOG TIRED! I WENT TO BED! BUT I DIDN'T SLEEP WELL! I HEARD THINGS! I SWEAR IT! SOMEONE, SOMETHING, PROWLING AROUND OUR DOOR! BUT IN THE MORNING...

I MUST HAVE BEEN DREAMING! AND NO WONDER! THIS PLACE LOOKS EVEN WORSE IN DAYLIGHT THAN IT DID LAST NIGHT! CAIN...



HOW COULD I RESIST! I PULLED THE COVERINGS AWAY! THEY FELL TO THE FLOOR! AND STARK, SOUL-SHATTERING HORROR WRAPPED ME IN ITS CLAMMY EMBRACE!



FOR AN INSTANT... IT SEEMED... BUT THERE CAN'T BE... THERE NEVER WAS A... A THING LIKE THAT!

I... I WARNED YOU! I TOLD YOU TO STAY IN YOUR ROOM! I WARNED YOU! YOU FOOL! GET OUT! GET OUT!



I... NO! CAIN, THIS IS INSANE! YOU'VE ALWAYS PUT A TOUCH OF THE STRANGE IN YOUR PICTURES, BUT THIS IS MONSTROUS! THIS TIME YOU'VE GONE TOO FAR! THERE'S A LIMIT!

THERE IS NO LIMIT TO THE REALITY AN ARTIST CAN PORTRAY IF HE WILL! I WARNED YOU! BUT YOU HAD TO SNEAK, TO PRY! SO NOW YOU'VE SEEN IT! MY MASTERPIECE!



REALITY! YOU CALL THIS... THIS BLASPHEMY, REALITY! IT'S... IT'S GOOD, I'LL GRANT YOU! B-BUT... PEOPLE DON'T WANT TO BE DISGUSTED! CAIN, YOU'RE ILL!

YES, GORDON! I'M ILL! ILL WITH THE MEALY-MOUTHED PLATITUDES OF FOOLS LIKE YOU! ILL WITH A SUGAR-COATED WORLD THAT WON'T FACE TRUTH! DISGUSTING? TRUTH IS NEVER DISGUSTING!





MY PICTURE HORRIFIES YOU, SO YOU TRY TO EXPLAIN IT! SUCH THINGS DO NOT EXIST! SUCH HORRORS ARE ONLY IN THE BRAINS OF MADMEN! YOU FOOL! YOU POOR, BLIND FOOL! THIS PICTURE WAS PAINTED FROM LIFE!



LOOK OUT THERE! THAT'S GIBBET HILL! WHERE THEY BURNED WITCHES AND WARLOCKS! BECAUSE THEY KNEW THAT SUCH THINGS DO EXIST!

CAIN! STOP IT! YOU... YOU'RE RAVING! THIS HOUSE, THIS ATMOSPHERE OF DECAY, YOUR BREAKDOWN... THEY'VE ALL COMBINED, YOU'VE LET THE DECAY CREEP INTO YOUR MIND!



"SUDDENLY, HE WAS QUIET! ALL BUT HIS EYES! THEY WERE ALIVE! ALIVE WITH INNER HORRORS I COULD ONLY GUESS AT!"

SO YOU THINK THAT, TOO! WHY DO YOU THINK NO ONE WOULD DRIVE YOU OUT HERE! BECAUSE THEY KNOW! THEY' KNEW JUST AS THEIR ANCESTORS KNEW!

NO ONE WOULD DRIVE ME OUT BECAUSE IT WAS LATE AND RAINING! THERE'S NOTHING HERE TO BE AFRAID OF EXCEPT WHAT'S IN YOUR MIND!



NOTHING, GORDON? NOTHING! ALL RIGHT! COME WITH ME IF YOU HAVE THE COURAGE! AND I'LL SHOW YOU!

HE RAN OUT AND DOWN THE STAIRS LIKE A MAN POSSESSED! AND BECAUSE I WAS AFRAID THAT HE MIGHT DO HIMSELF HARM, I FOLLOWED! TO THE CELLAR... AND BEYOND!

YOU DIDN'T KNOW THAT MY FAMILY HAS OWNED THIS HOUSE FOR TWO CENTURIES, DID YOU, GORDON? YOU DIDN'T KNOW THAT ONE OF THEM WAS BURNED AS A WARLOCK ON GIBBET HILL!



THEY SAID HE HAD A DEMON, GORDON! THAT HE BUILT THIS TUNNEL FOR IT! FOR TWO CENTURIES IT'S BEEN CLOSED UP! BUT I OPENED IT!



"THAT TUNNEL SEEMED ENDLESS!

IT WAS WET, COLD, BLACK! AND LOCKMAN RAVED ON AND ON! I WANTED TO TURN BACK! BUT I DIDN'T DARE! AND THEN... WE WERE THERE!

LOOK, GORDON! LOOK! LOOK AT THAT PIT! WHERE HE STAYS BY DAY! THE THING YOU SAW IN MY PAINTING! HE SLEEPS NOW, BUT YOU CAN HEAR HIM! LISTEN, GORDON! LISTEN!

CAIN, GET HOLD OF YOURSELF! IT'S JUST AN OLD CISTERN! THERE'S NOTHING DOWN THERE! NOTHING!





I SWEAR I HEARD IT THEN! A RASPING, BREATHING SOUND! DESPITE MYSELF I LEANED OVER THAT PIT OF HORROR! AND THE STENCH! THE STENCH!

WHATEVER IT IS, IT'S HORRIBLE! LIKE THE ODOR OF A HUNDRED DECAYING BODIES! L-LET'S GET AWAY FROM HERE!

BUT WHY, GORDON? WHAT ARE YOU AFRAID OF? IT'S STILL DAYLIGHT! HE ONLY WALKS AT NIGHT! BESIDES, SUCH THINGS DON'T EXIST! YOU SAID SO!



NOW YOU KNOW! NOW YOU CAN GO! NOW YOU CAN LEAVE ME IN PEACE TO FINISH MY PAINTING!

NO! I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE! NOT UNLESS YOU COME WITH ME! CAIN, YOU'RE MY FRIEND! I CAN'T LEAVE YOU ALONE TO GO ON WITH THIS... THIS MADNESS!



SO YOU WILL STAY! ALL RIGHT, GORDON! BUT WHATEVER HAPPENS, IT WILL BE ON YOUR OWN HEAD! REMEMBER THAT! IT WILL BE ON YOUR OWN HEAD!



WE WENT BACK AND I DID NOT SEE LOCKMAN AGAIN THAT DAY! HE WAS UPSTAIRS, WORKING! BUT AT SUNDOWN...

CAIN, WHAT ARE YOU DOING THERE? WHAT IS THAT STUFF?

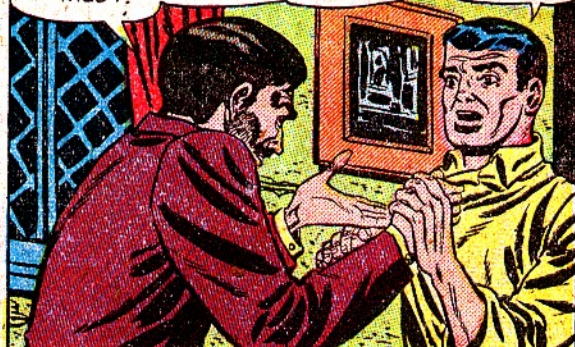
WOLF'SBANE, GORDON! IT GROWS WILD ON GIBBET HILL! WOLF'SBANE TO KEEP HIM OUT! NO DEMON OR WITCH OR THING OF NIGHT CAN PASS THE FLOWERING GREEN!



HE WAS QUOTING FROM SOME ANCIENT TOME ON BLACK MAGIC! LOCKMAN WAS INSANE! I WAS CERTAIN, THEN!

EACH NIGHT HE TRIES TO GET IN! BUT HE CAN'T! HE CAN'T PASS THE WOLF'SBANE! THE OLD ONES KNEW! THEY USED IT, TOO! BUT WE MUST STAY IN THIS ROOM! WE MUST!

OF COURSE, CAIN! OF... OF COURSE!



I DIDN'T GO TO BED! HOW COULD I SLEEP IN THAT ACCURSED HOUSE! I WAS NERVOUS, TENSE! PERHAPS THAT WAS WHY I HEARD... WHAT I DID!

SCRAPING! THE SAME SOUND I HEARD... FROM THE PIT! AND IT'S... COMING NEARER!

GORDON, IT'S HIM! CAN'T YOU HEAR HIM?



I HEAR SOMETHING! BUT I'M GOING TO PROVE TO YOU ONCE AND FOR ALL THAT IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK! I'M GOING OUT THERE!

NO! YOU FOOL! YOU BLIND, UNBELIEVING FOOL! CAN YOU FIGHT A THING THAT HAS EXISTED SINCE TIME BEGAN! CAN YOU STAND UP TO THAT?





I PUSHED HIM ASIDE, HE WAS SLIGHT, WASTED, IT WAS NO EFFORT, BUT I NEVER GOT TO THE DOOR!



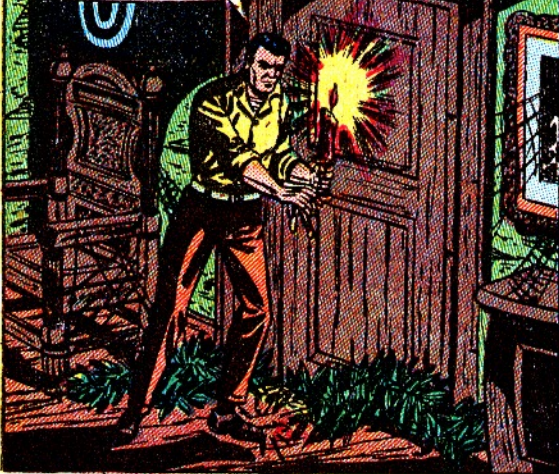
"IT'S ALL HAZY AFTER THAT! THE NIGHT MUST HAVE PASSED, BECAUSE ONCE I OPENED MY EYES AND IT WAS DAY! BUT THEN, SOMEHOW, IT WAS NIGHT AGAIN...



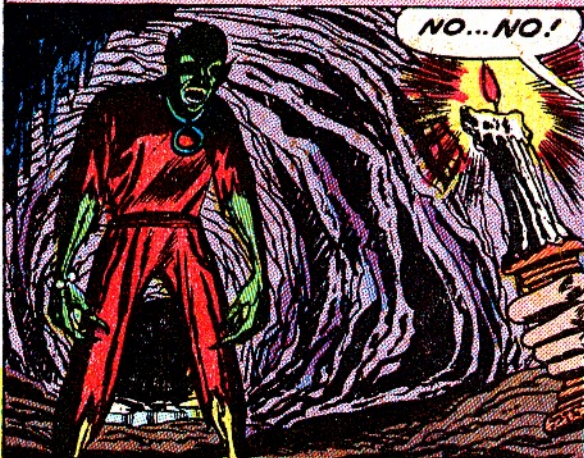
"I COULD FEEL IT! THE FEVER IN MY BODY, BURNING, BUT I HAD TO GET AWAY! I HAD TO, BEFORE THAT MADMAN KILLED ME!



DEMONS... WOLF'SBANE... IDIOCY! THAT...



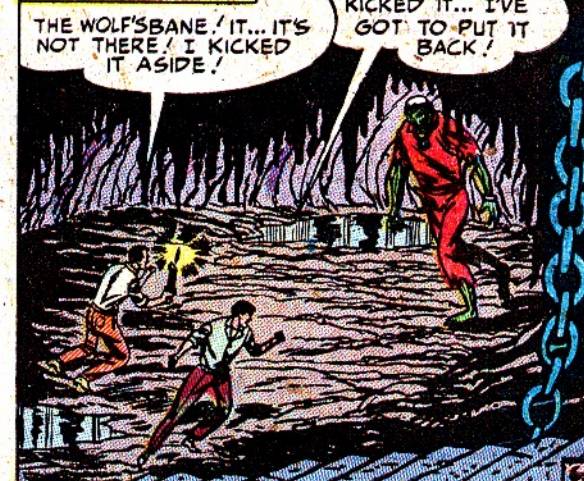
"AND THEN, I HEARD IT AGAIN! THE SCRAPING! I TURNED... AND IT WAS THERE! AT THE END OF THAT CORRIDOR! IT WAS... IT WAS...



GORDON! WHAT IS IT? WHAT... IT'S HIM! GET BACK! INSIDE! QUICKLY! WE'LL BE SAFER INSIDE. HE CAN'T PASS THE WOLF'SBANE!



"I FELL TO THE FLOOR, BLUBBERING... AND THEN I REMEMBERED!





"HE RAN TO THE DOOR! BUT HE NEVER FOUND THE WOLF'S BANE! THERE WASN'T TIME! I SAW WHAT HAPPENED! I TELL YOU I SAW! CAIN! CAIN! SCREAMED... AND SCREAMED... AND SCREAMED!"

NO! NO! NO!

CAIN! CAIN!



"SOMEHOW I STAGGERED TO MY FEET! I FOUND THE DOOR THAT LED TO THAT BIG, HOLLOWLY ECHOING HALL! THEN I WAS OUTSIDE! OUTSIDE WITH THE BLESSED AIR CLEAN AND COOL ON MY FACE! I RAN, BLINDLY! UNTIL I COULD RUN NO MORE!"

SAFE! I'M... SAFE!



I DON'T REMEMBER WHO IT WAS THAT FOUND ME! THERE WERE JUST FACES, KIND, NORMAL FACES...

POOR FELLOW! HE MUST HAVE HAD A HORRIBLE TIME! BUT AT LEAST HE'S STILL ALIVE! BEATS ME HOW HE GOT OUT OF THAT INFERNO, THOUGH! TOO BAD THAT ARTIST... LOCKMAN... WASN'T AS LUCKY!



I'VE GOT TO GET OUT! THE DOOR TO THE OUTSIDE! WHICH WAY IS IT? WHICH WAY! I'VE GOT TO...

OH-H-H-



"THEY TOLD ME, AFTERWARD, IT WAS ALL GONE! THE HOUSE, LOCKMAN, THE PAINTING, THE ENTRANCE TO THE TUNNEL, EVERYTHING! THEY SAID I WAS ILL, THAT I ONLY DREAMED WHAT I SAW!"

BUT A MAN DOES NOT GROW OLD BETWEEN DARK AND DAWN BECAUSE HE IS ILL! A MAN'S HAIR DOES NOT TURN SNOW WHITE IN THE SPACE OF ONE BLACK NIGHT... BECAUSE OF A DREAM!



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